

**REMARKS:****I. General**

Claims 15, 16 and 19 are pending in the application. Claims 3-6, 8, 13, 18 20 and 22 are withdrawn in order to focus the arguments presented herein to claim 19. The issues in the Office Action mailed Feb. 12, 2009 are as follows:

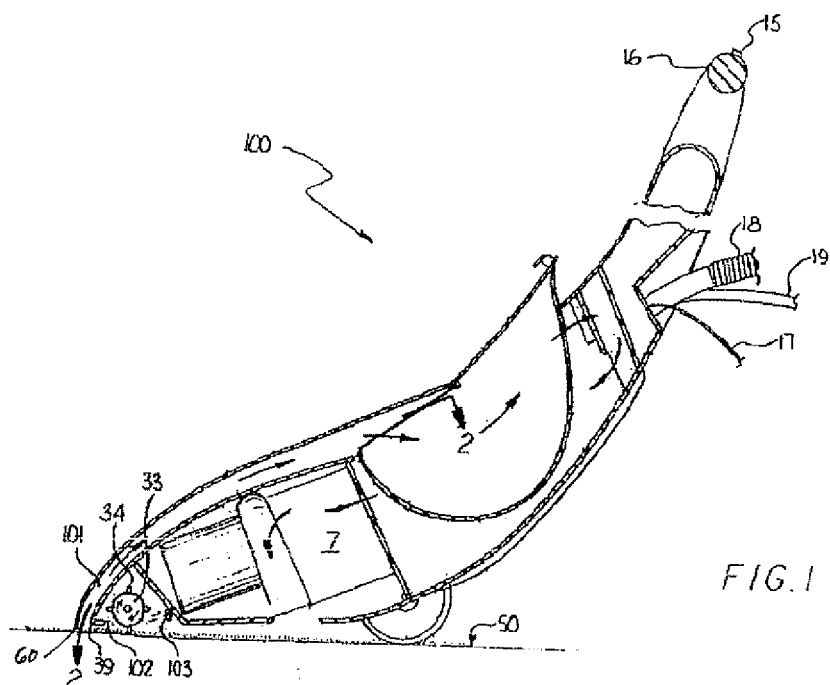
- Claims 3-6, 8, 12-13, 18, 20, 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Satoh in view of Korski or Baird.
- Claims 9-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Satoh in view of Postenen.
- Claim 19 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Satoh in view of Korski or Baird and further in view of Beauchamp or Hekman.

Applicant hereby traverses the outstanding rejections and objections and requests reconsideration and withdrawal in light of the remarks and amendments contained herein.

**II. 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Rejections**

Claim 19 stands rejected over Satoh in view of Korski or Baird and further in view of Beauchamp or Hekman. It is submitted that the rejection based on Beauchamp or Hekman is improper.

First, it is submitted that Beauchamp does not disclose a vacuum extractor slot with ends of said pair of walls being in contact with the cylindrical cleaning medium. Figure 1 of Beauchamp clearly shows that the vacuum end (39/60) is applied directly to the carpet surface (50) and is not in contact with the cylindrical cleaning medium (33/34).



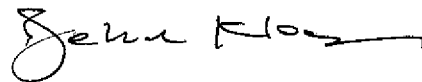
Second, Hekman is not prior art in this application. Hekman and the present application are sibling applications, as both applications claim priority to U.S. Ser. No. 10/081,374. As a result, reliance on Hekman is improper.

Applicant has attached an Appendix A including a set of proposed claim amendments for Examiner's consideration in view of the present arguments regarding Beauchamp and Hekman. The amendments to proposed claim 15 includes the limitations of claim 19 as discussed above.

### III. Conclusion

In view of the above amendment, Applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



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APPENDIX A  
PROPOSED CLAIM AMENDMENTS  
NOT TO BE ENTERED AT THIS TIME

1 - 14. (canceled)

15. (currently amended) A method of cleaning a carpeted surface, said method being performed by a surface maintenance machine and comprising:

spraying a portion of a revolving cylindrical cleaning medium with a cleaning liquid;

removing some soil and some of the cleaning liquid from the previously wetted portion of the cylindrical cleaning medium using a vacuum extractor having a vacuum extractor slot, said removing drawing soil and cleaning liquid through said vacuum device and occurring prior to said portion revolving into contact with the carpet surface; wherein the cylindrical cleaning medium is rotated about an axis which is generally perpendicular to a direction of machine use, and said vacuum extractor slot includes a pair of generally parallel walls, with ends of said pair of walls being in contact with the cylindrical cleaning medium;

~~contacting said previously wetted portion of the cleaning medium with a drip guard; said drip guard extending substantially across a length of said cleaning medium; and said drip guard redirecting cleaning solution thrown from the revolving cleaning medium back onto the cleaning medium, thereby preventing droplets of cleaning solution from falling onto the surface intended to be cleaned;~~

wiping the carpeted surface with the portion of the revolving cleaning medium so as to transfer soil from the carpeted surface to the cleaning medium; and repeating said spraying, removing, contacting and wiping the carpeted surface during a carpet cleaning procedure.

16. (previously presented) The method of claim 15 wherein spraying involves pumping a cleaning liquid from a reservoir carried by the surface maintenance machine through a nozzle, said nozzle spraying substantially all of its spray output directly onto the cleaning medium, with said cleaning medium being positioned between the nozzle and the surface intended to be cleaned.

17. (Canceled)

18. (currently amended) The method of claim ~~16~~ 15 wherein ~~said wiping involves rotating a cylindrical cleaning medium in contact with the carpeted surface, and said vacuum device includes a vacuum extractor slot~~ extending extends substantially along across the cylindrical cleaning medium, with said vacuum extractor slot being positioned between said nozzle and said surface intended to be cleaned.

19. (canceled)

20. (previously presented) The method of claim 15 wherein the surface maintenance machine either a self-propelled machine or a non-propelled machine.

21. – 22. (canceled)